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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/613,341	07/03/2003	Neil Andrew Abercrombie Simpson	MRKS/0093	5149

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EXAMINER

NICHOLSON, ERIC K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 12/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/613,341

Applicant(s)

SIMPSON ET AL.

Examiner

Eric K Nicholson

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 September 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 15-38 and 40-48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 30,33-36 and 40-46 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12,15-29,31,32,37,38,47 and 48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This application contains claims 30,33-36 and 40-46 are drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in applicant's response to the restriction requirement. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01. As per applicant's remarks in the amendment claim 33 has also been withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1,2,4-18,31-32,37,38,47 and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 4,822,081 to Blose. The Blose coupling includes male threaded portion 12 and female threaded portion 13 wherein the thread portions are dovetail threads having flanks inclined at an angle of greater than 10 degrees. See figs. 1-4 and 6-8 for the dovetail threads and column 7, lines 14-57 disclosing flanks greater than 10 degrees and also the angles claimed in claims 4-9. As to claim 10, see. Fig. 6. As to claim 11 see fig. 11 and column 4, lines 50-55. As to claims 12-18 see Fig. 6 which illustrates the undercut groove 43,44 for the

leading portion of the male member and the undercut groove 41,42 for the leading portion of the female and also the groove and seal member in the female member.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-12,15-29,31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,409,175 to Evans in view of U.S. patent 4,822,081 to Blose. The Evans patent discloses the claimed device with male threaded portion 26 and female threaded portion 27 wherein the thread portions are hooked (fig. 7 and column 3, lines 1-57) however the hooked threads are not dovetail with flanks angles greater than 10 degrees. As noted above the Blose threaded coupling discloses that it is known in the art to provide a similar type coupling with the dovetail threads having flanks greater than 10 degrees. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the hooked thread

of Evans with the dovetail thread as taught by Blose, in order to provide a more secure coupling by allowing high axial compression loading while controlling deformation in the threaded joint.

Conclusion

Applicant's arguments as they pertain to the amended claims have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the Blose patent 4,822,081 and the Evans patent 6,409,175 do not include an undercut groove along the end portion of one tubular member to receive the nose of the other tubular member. The examiner disagrees, the Blose coupling illustrates an undercut 43 in fig. 6 and the Evans patent illustrates an undercut as shown in figs. 7A and 7B. Applicant has not set forth any structure or any arguments as to why the undercuts of the Blose and Evans devices would not operate in the same manner as that of the present invention.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

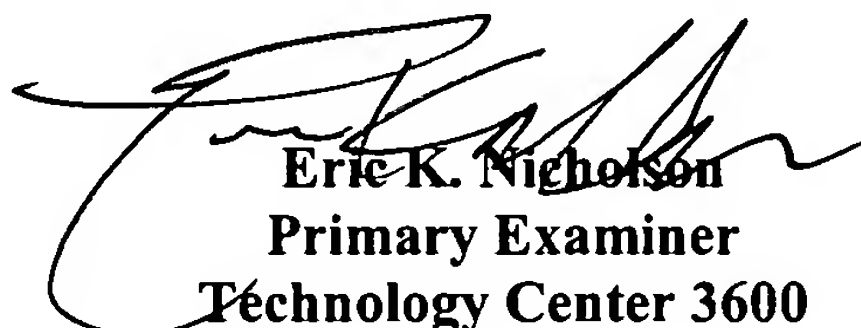
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Nicholson whose telephone number is (703) 308-0829. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesdays thru Fridays from 7:30 to 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola, can be reached on (703) 308-2686. The fax phone number for Technology Center 3600 is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).

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4/20/04


Eric K. Nicholson
Primary Examiner
Technology Center 3600